

538 ^MILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND
REFORMER

done so, nor has the Church, nor has any other powerful and wealthy organisation. Zola had only his brain and his pen, and with those weapons he did his best, according to his lights. He was all sincerity; hypocrisy was the thing he most detested. He fought the good fight. After setting forth the evil that was, he preached the cleanly and the fruitful life, brotherliness, equity, rectitude, and truthfulness.

He desired the suppression of all noxious agents, and it was because he regarded the Roman Church as such that he assailed it so fiercely. Moreover, he did not share the delusion which imagines a heaven beyond the skies; he wished to set a heaven in this our planet. That was his ideal. He did not believe in resignation. He placed his faith in work and effort. He loved his Mother Earth, he pictured her beauties. He loved his fellowmen; in his harshest moments he sought their good only. The one error of his life showed how human he was. If he were ambitious it was that he might advocate the principles in which he believed, with more and more authority. In a dim and dolorous hour,

" when God himself seemed
dumb
And all his arching skies were in
eclipse,"

this abused and insulted novelist turned from
Ms work and
smote for truth and justice. Others shall

decide whether
he was a man of genius; suffice it for us that,
all his life,
he was a man of bravery. He feared none. If
there was
tragedy in his career, he knew how to bear it.
He felt, he
prophesied, the day would come when justice
would be done
to him. That day is hastening; and in
whatever estima-